



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Employment Department

875 Union Street NE

Salem, OR 97311

(503) 947-1394

TTY 1-503-947-1391

www.emp.state.or.us

November 14, 2003

The Honorable Greg Walden
U.S. Representative, District 2
1404 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515



Dear Representative Walden:

I am writing in support of your proposed legislation to eliminate the "look back" provision for the second tier (TEUC-X) of Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) benefits through the establishment of an alternate trigger. This proposed change to federal law will be a huge help in supporting long-term unemployed individuals and communities in Oregon.

Because Oregon is in an extended benefit period, we are now paying 26 weeks of TEUC benefits to approximately 23,500 individuals representing 27% of the total number of workers receiving unemployment compensation in Oregon each week. This is 13 weeks of regular TEUC and 13 weeks of the second tier (TEUC-X) benefits. While we do not know for sure, we expect to trigger off of the federal/state shared Extended Benefits program in December or January. When this happens, about 40% of the individuals (9,400) receiving TEUC-X benefits will no longer be eligible. Coupled with the fact that about 1,500 individuals exhaust their TEUC benefits each week, many people in Oregon will be facing financial disaster. As an aside, more than 23,000 people or, 13% of Oregonians receiving unemployment compensation in 2003 to date, have already exhausted all benefits in Oregon, so the safety net already has enough holes in it.

It is also our hope that other legislation intended to extend the TEUC program beyond the current ending date of December 31, 2003 can be passed by Congress. Any help you can provide to support those pieces of legislation as well as reduce the "look back" for TEUC-X benefits will help minimize the financial strain many people in Oregon are now going through.

Thank you for sharing this information with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Hickman".
Greg Hickman
Acting Director

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